

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, and 19-22 are pending. The present Amendment amends Claims 1 and 2; cancels Claims 8 and 10-16 without prejudice or disclaimer; and adds Claims 19-22 without introducing any new matter.

The outstanding Office Action objected to the drawings. In addition, Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Toshiyuki (European Patent Application Publication No. 0 545 429); and Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Toshiyuki in view of Winston et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,671,452, hereinafter "Winston").

Initially, Applicant respectfully requests that the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed February 26, 2007 be acknowledged as having been considered in the next Office Action. In particular, the Office Action has not considered Japanese Patent Publication No. 11-203925 or Japanese Patent Publication No. 64-29708 on the grounds that the Information Disclosure Statement did not include a explanation of the relevance of these particular references as required by 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3). Japanese Patent Publication No. 11-203925 and Japanese Patent Publication No. 64-29708 were cited in a Japanese Office Action. These references were properly filed together with the Japanese Patent Office Action and an English language translation of the Japanese Patent Office Action in compliance with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3).¹ Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that Japanese Patent Publication No. 11-203925 and Japanese Patent Publication No. 64-29708 cited in the

¹ See MPEP § 609.04(a)III, "Where the information listed is not in the English language, but was cited in a search report or other action by a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, the requirement for a concise explanation of relevance can be satisfied by submitting an English-language version of the search report or action which indicates the degree of relevance found by the foreign office. This may be an explanation of which portion of the reference is particularly relevant, to which claims it applies, or merely an "X", "Y", or "A" indication on a search report."

Information Disclosure Statement filed February 26, 2007 be acknowledged as having been considered in the next Office Action.

Claims 1 and 2 are amended. These amendments find support in the specification as originally filed and therefore do not raise a question of new matter.²

New Claims 19-22 are added. These new claims find support in the specification as originally filed and therefore do not raise a question of new matter.³

In response to the Restriction Requirement being made final, Claims 8 and 10-16, directed to non-elected inventions, are canceled. Applicant reserves the right to present claims directed to the non-elected inventions in a divisional application, which shall be subject to the third sentence of 35 U.S.C. § 121.⁴

In response to the objection the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims, it is respectfully submitted that the drawings filed on October 15, 2004 comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) and therefore do not require any revision. The outstanding Office Action asserts that the drawings do not show the “combination of a plurality of backlights of different shapes” recited in Claim 2.

Amended Claim 2 recites:

a first backlight unit that includes a single light source and
a single light guide plate, and
a second backlight unit that includes a single light source
and at least two light guide plates, *so that the first backlight unit
has a different shape than the second backlight unit*

As described in an example on page 27, lines 11-18 with reference to Figures 22A and 22B of the originally filed specification, groups of individual backlights that share a single lamp can be understood as a single backlight unit. Furthermore, Figure 23 depicts a backlight

² See the specification as originally filed, for example, at page 10, line 3 to page 15, line 26, for Claim 1; and page 27, line 9 to page 28, line 16 for Claim 2, for example.

³ See the specification as originally filed, for example, at page 10, lines 12-17, and page 13, line 28 to page 14, line 1.

⁴ “A patent issuing on an application with respect to which a requirement for restriction under this section has been made ... shall not be used as a reference ... against a divisional application.” See also MPEP § 804.01.

according to one embodiment of the present invention formed by combining five backlight units including a lamp (15) with ten backlight units including a lamp (51). Thus, since the lamp (51) is longer than the lamp (15), the five backlight units including the lamp (15) are shorter on one side than the ten backlight units including a lamp (51). Therefore, the drawings show every feature of Claim 2. It is respectfully requested that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Amended Claim 1 relates to a backlight configured to illuminate a back of a video display unit formed by a single panel. Amended Claim 1 recites:

a plurality of backlight units arranged to be incident to a lighting surface, each of said backlight units including:
a light source,
a light reflecting unit configured to reflect a light emitted from said light source onto a light guide plate, and
the light guide plate configured to direct said light incident thereon through said light reflecting unit onto said lighting surface.
(Emphasis Added).

Turning to the applied reference, Toshiyuki describes surface lighting device. Figure 7 of Toshiyuki illustrates a surface lighting device that includes opposing light sources (1a) and (1b), a reflection board (2), and a light guide (4).⁵ However, Toshiyuki fails to describe the claimed backlight device that includes *a plurality of backlight units* arranged to be incident to a lighting surface.

The outstanding Office Action identifies the surface lighting device depicted in Figure 27 of Toshiyuki as “backlight being formed by combining a plurality of backlight units.”⁶ The surface lighting device depicted in Figure 27 of Toshiyuki includes multiple light sources (1a and 1b), but only a *single* light guide.⁷ Toshiyuki describes that the single light guide may be divided. For example, with reference to Figure 7, Toshiyuki states that “a light guide

⁵ See Toshiyuki, at col. 7, line 40 to col. 8, line 15.

⁶ See the outstanding Office Action at page 4, lines 10-11.

⁷ See Toshiyuki, at col. 18, lines 14-19.

4 is divided in the central portion of the opposing light sources 1a and 1b.”⁸ However, Toshiyuki further describes that “the divided portions are bonded by a transparent adhesives 7.”⁹ Therefore, even though the light guide (4) includes a division, it is nonetheless still a *single* light guide. By contrast, amended Claim 1 recites *a plurality of backlight units* and that each of said backlight units includes a light source and a light guide plate. A surface lighting device that includes multiple light sources and a single light guide is not the claimed backlight device that includes *a plurality of backlight units*.

Accordingly, Toshiyuki does not disclose or suggest the features of amended independent Claim 1. It is submitted that amended independent Claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are in condition for allowance.

Amended independent Claim 2 recites:

a plurality of backlight units arranged to be incident to a lighting surface, each of said backlight units including:
a light source,
a light reflecting unit configured to reflect a light emitted from said light source onto a light guide plate,
the light guide plate configured to direct said light incident thereon through said light reflecting unit onto said lighting surface,
a first backlight unit that includes a single light source and a single light guide plate, and
a second backlight unit that includes a single light source and at least two light guide plates, so that the first backlight unit has a different shape than the second backlight unit
(Emphasis Added).

As discussed above, Toshiyuki fails to describe or suggest *a plurality of backlight units* arranged to be incident to a lighting surface. Winston fails to cure this deficiency. Winston describes a multilayer luminaire device. Figure 2a. of Winston illustrates a multilayer luminaire device (10) that includes a base or wedge layer (12). A light source (22), injects light (24) through a back surface (20) into a wedge layer (12). The light (24) is

⁸ See Toshiyuki, at col. 7, lines 50-51.

⁹ See Toshiyuki, at col. 7, lines 51-53.

internally reflected from the various wedge layer surfaces and is directed along the wedge layer (12) toward an edge (26). However, Winston fails to describe or suggest *a plurality of backlight units* arranged to be incident to a lighting surface. To the contrary, Winston describes several different embodiments of a *single* multilayer luminaire device (10). A single multilayer device is not the claimed plurality of backlight units.

Accordingly, even the combined teachings of Toshiyuki and Winston fail to disclose or suggest the features of amended independent Claim 2. It is submitted that amended independent Claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

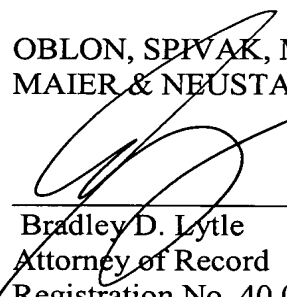
New Claims 19-22 patentably define over the cited art for at least the same reasons as amended Claim 1, from which they depend. Claims 19-22 also recite additional features which are not suggested by the cited references, particularly in combination with the features of amended Claim 1. Accordingly, new Claims 19-22 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

For the reasons discussed above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance for Claims 1, 2, and 19-22 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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